

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Fishing Gaff with Multi-Position Fish Hook

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Not applicable

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not applicable

INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC

Not applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to fishing implements and accessories, and more particularly to a hand held fishing gaff having multiple positions of orientation of its fish hook or fish engaging portion.

Description of Related Art

Manually held fishing gaffs are well known. Such gaffs include an elongated handle for hand grasping at the hand grasping or gripping end thereof and having a rigid generally U-shaped fish hook extending longitudinally from the opposite or proximal end of the handle. However, such well known fish gaffs typically have an entirely straight handle which limits the ergonomic hand holding utility thereof in that the handle itself may easily twist and rotate within even the firmest hand grasp of a fisherman, thus making it difficult to maintain a desired orientation of the fish hook best suited for each particular situation of use.

The present invention provides two unique structural improvements to such conventional fish gaffs. The first improvement is with respect to the fish hook or fish engaging portion itself. This aspect of the invention provides multiple positional orientations of the fish hook so that the user of the fish hook may quickly selectively orient the direction of alignment of the fish hook to the handle of the gaff. This selective, quickly relockable reorientation of the fish hook itself is particularly beneficial, in combination with an arcuately or offset gripping or grasping portion of the handle as it extends away from the longitudinal axis of the main portion of the handle itself. This offset gripping portion of the handle allows the user to maintain rotational orientation of the handle in keeping with a particular selected orientational position of the fish hook so that the user may maintain the fish hook, for example, in a forwardly, rearwardly or sideward orientation for selected use thereof in gaffing a fish in water under a wide variety of circumstances and preferences.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention is directed to a hand held fishing gaff for manually engaging and lifting fish from water having a multi-position fish hook. The fishing gaff includes an elongated handle having a substantially straight main portion and a grasping or gripping portion preferably arcuately shaped and extending away from a longitudinal axis of the straight portion and terminating at a distal end of the handle. A fish engaging member has a substantially straight shank portion and an arcuately shaped hook portion terminating in a sharpened distal tip thereof. The shank portion is connected in substantially colinear alignment within, and extending from the handle proximal end and is lockably positionable in a plurality of different rotationally aligned positions about the

longitudinal axis and with respect to said grasping or gripping portion. A fish hook detent interconnected between the straight portion and shank portion and is selectively self-locking into one of a plurality of positional orientations of the fish hook. The handle is hollow and of sufficient interior air volume, in combination with a closed cell foam handle grip cover, to render the fish gaff substantially buoyant in water. The handle preferably has a uniform oval cross section to enhance gripability and a sense of the orientation of the handle when gripped. A detent is spring loaded whereby pushing axially on said fish hook axially moves and releases the fish hook from locking engagement with the detent for rotational repositioning thereof into another one of the plurality of positional orientations, releasing of the fish hook thereafter relocking the fish hook into the detent in the other selected fish hook orientations.

It is therefore an object of this invention to provide a hand held fishing gaff having quickly selectable and relocking multiple positional orientations of the fish hook with respect to the handle.

It is another object of this invention to provide a fishing gaff having a spring loaded detent between the proximal end of the handle and the shank of the fish hook for quick automatic locking engagement of any selected rotational orientation of the fish hook about a longitudinal axis of the handle.

Still another object of this invention is to provide a fish gaff having the unique combination of a multi-positionable fish hook about the longitudinal axis of the handle and an offset, preferably arcuately configured handle gripping portion which allows the user to maintain a desired axial positioning of the handle in combination with one of a plurality of fish hook orientations.

In accordance with these and other objects which will become apparent hereinafter, the instant invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S)

Figure 1 is a front elevation partially broken view of the invention showing multiple positions of the fish hook in both solid and phantom lines.

Figure 2 is a perspective exploded view of the fish hook and spring-biased detent arrangement therefor.

Figure 3 is an assembled perspective view of Figure 2.

Figure 4 is a lower perspective view of the spring keeper of the detent assembly of Figure 2.

Figure 5 is an upper perspective view of Figure 4.

Figure 6 is a lower perspective view of the shank support cap member of the detent assembly of Figure 2.

Figure 7 is an upper perspective view of Figure 6.

Figure 8 is an end elevation view of Figure 7.

Figure 9 is a side elevation view of Figure 7.

Figure 10 is a bottom plan view of Figure 9.

Figure 11 is a section view in the direction of arrows 11-11 in Figure 8.

Figure 12 is an enlarged view of area A of Figure 11.

Figure 13 is a side elevation partially broken view of Figure 4.

Figure 14 is a section view in the direction of arrows 14-14 in Figure 13.

Figure 15 is an end elevation view of Figure 13.

Figure 16 is a top plan view of Figure 13.

Figure 17 is a bottom plan view of Figure 13.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawings, the invention is there shown in Figure 1 generally at numeral **10**. This fishing gaff **10** includes an elongated handle assembly **12** and a fish hook assembly **14**. The handle **12** is formed of an elongated length of tubular extruded aluminum material having a generally oval cross section as best seen in Figures 10, 16 and 17 with respect to the detent assembly **15** which will be described herebelow.

The main or proximal portion **17** of an elongated handle tubular member **16** of handle **12** is generally straight about a longitudinal axis **L** passing centrally therethrough. The gripping or distal portion **18** of the handle **12** is formed arcuately and extends away from the longitudinal axis **L** toward the distal end **21** thereof. A tubular foam covering **20** formed of closed cell foam material is provided for both enhanced grippability and additional buoyancy to render the entire fish hook **10** buoyant preferably in combination with the STYRAFOAM **24** which is packed fully within the hollow interior of the handle tubular member **16** to achieve buoyancy in water. A semi-spherical cap **22** provides sealing engagement in water tight fashion into the distal end **21** of the tubular member **16**.

The fish hook assembly **14** includes the fish hook **30** formed of cylindrical stainless steel rod and having a substantially straight shank **30c**, a U-shaped main hook portion **30a** and a distal pointed or sharpened tip **30b**. A protective tip cover **32c** snugly and elastically fits over the pointed distal tip **30b** and is kept in place by resilient band **32b** of a tip guard **32**. the tip guard or cover **32** is held in position on the fish hook **30** by a tubular

enlargement **32a**, the entire tip protector **32** being formed as a unit of resilient elastomeric or plastic material.

The fish hook assembly **14** also includes a detent assembly **15** including a cap member **26** which lockingly engages with a spring keeper **42** as best seen in Figures 2 and 3. The cap member **26** has a spherical exposed surface having a central longitudinal aperture **58** formed therethrough as best seen in Figures 7 to 12. The longitudinal aperture **58** is sized to snugly receive the shank **32c**. The spring keeper **42** as best seen in Figures 4, 5 and 14 to 17 is formed of molded plastic material as is the cap member **26**, and includes an oval shaped cylindrical outer surface **54** sized to snugly be fitted into the inner surface of the tubular handle member **16** as does the cap member **26** at surface **36**. The central portion **70** is hollowed to mate around the oval shaped cylindrical surface **36** of the cap member **26**.

The cap member **26** and the spring keeper **42** are lockably engaged together by resilient tabs **48** of the cap member **26** which lockably engage into apertures **50** of the spring keeper by deflection in the direction of arrows **C** in Figure 9. The assembled together cap member **26** and spring keeper **42** are held in position within the tubular handle member **16** by a conventional flat headed screw **28** threadably engaged into a transverse aperture **28a** of the cap member **26**.

The shank **30c** also extends through longitudinal aperture **52** of the spring keeper **42**. Again, a very snug slidable engaging fit stabilizes the entire fish hook **30** to permit substantially only rotational and limited longitudinal movement of the shank **30c** about and along axis **L**. A compression spring **46** is positioned between flat washers **44** which are positioned between and against the interior transverse surface **56** of the spring

keeper **42** as seen in Figures 5 and 14 and against retention pins **40** which are tightly engaged into transverse apertures **38** formed through the shank **30c**. The compression spring **46** as installed in the relaxed position is under compression so as to exert pressure against the washers **44** and to thus cause the locking pins **40** to be biasingly urged into one of two transverse cavities **64** or **66** of the cap member **26** as best seen in Figures 10 and 12. The locking pins **40**, being longer than the diameter of the shank **30c**, will be biasingly engaged into one of these two cavities **64** or **66** so as to retain the selected orientation of the U-shaped main portion **30a** of fish hook **30** in one of four orthogonal positions as shown in Figure 1. Thus, the fish hook **30** may be oriented as shown in solid line with the U-shaped main portion **30a** disposed in a plane with the gripping portion **18** of handle **12**, but in an opposite direction therefrom. The fish hook **30** may also be positioned orthogonally opposite to that position shown in phantom at **30a'** or in either position at **30a''** lying orthogonally transverse to a plane passing through the longitudinal axis **L** of handle **12**.

By this arrangement, the user, by grasping the gripping portion **18** and exerting pressure in the direction of arrow **B** against the U-shaped main portion **30a** of fish hook **30**, will overcome the spring pressure exerted by spring **46** to compress spring **46** and disengage the locking pins **40** from the currently selected cavity **64** or **66** and allow the fish hook **30** to be rotated about axis **L** into another desired orientation and then released for relocking engagement of the locking pins **40** into another of the selected locking cavities **64** or **66**.

This selective positioning of the fish hook **30**, in combination with the offset arcuate structure of the gripping portion **18** of handle **12**, permits a broad range of selected

variations of the utility of this invention **10**. Moreover, the user is provided an immediate sense of the orientation of the fish hook **30** when simply grasping the gripping portion **18** with a familiarity to its offset orientation benefits of rotational control with respect to the handle **12** and with respect to the selective benefits of rotational orientation of fish hook **30** with respect to the longitudinal axis **L**.

While the instant invention has been shown and described herein in what are conceived to be the most practical and preferred embodiments, it is recognized that departures may be made therefrom within the scope of the invention, which is therefore not to be limited to the details disclosed herein, but is to be afforded the full scope of the claims so as to embrace any and all equivalent apparatus and articles.